



Joe Vitti / The Star

**"How it was:"**  
Local historian Libbe Hughes (at Maple Hill Cemetery) wrote the introduction for John Hadley's republished Civil War memoir. It was part of the research for "Cold Mountain."

# 'Cold Mountain' has ties to local soldier/judge

**By Lynn Hopper**

Star correspondent

A little bit of Hendricks County went into the critically acclaimed book and movie "Cold Mountain."

Author Charles Frazier has acknowledged that he used Hendricks County native John V. Hadley's "Seven Months a Prisoner" as a source in his 1997 book.

Hadley's memoir seems to have contributed to the general atmosphere of "Cold Mountain" rather than actual events, according to Civil War enthusiast

## PLAINFIELD

Libbe Hughes of Danville.

"It's more a general feel of how it was," Hughes said. "Frazier's reading of the book was just basic research. In fact, the original book is very hard to find. I would be interested in knowing where Frazier found a copy."

Hughes will discuss the topic at 7 p.m. Feb. 19 at Plainfield-Guilford Township Public Li-

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# Mountain

■ Author later served on the Indiana Supreme Court.

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brary.

Civil War historian Richard Skidmore of Hanover, who has a small private printing company, reprinted Hadley's book in 1998 mostly because of Frazier's reference to it.

"It was a great human interest story, and the original publication was very scarce," Skidmore said.

Hadley, he said, "was a flesh-and-blood Hoosier who lived from 1840 to 1915. One hundred years after its first printing, 'Seven Months a Prisoner' can once again be widely appreciated."

Skidmore tapped local historian Hughes, 37, to write the foreword to the reprint.

"It is a great little story," she said of Hadley's memoir. "It's not the typical Civil War story, full of bravado. I was struck by the humanity and the fact they were just plain cowardly at times. Then,

Hadley went on to a remarkable career. He was a classic over-achiever."

Hadley was born in Guilford Township in 1840 and attended Northwestern Christian University — now Butler. He interrupted college to enlist in the war.

After his escape from a Confederate prisoner of war camp and his discharge from the Army in 1865, Hadley married, completed his education and was admitted to the bar.

He served three terms as state senator and was elected Circuit Court judge. He was a delegate to the Republican National Convention and was an Indiana Supreme Court judge from 1899 to 1911.

In 1914 he edited "History of Hendricks County."

The memoir of Hadley's escape from a Southern prison camp first appeared as a serial in the Danville Republican newspaper. It later appeared in pamphlet form, published nationally by Charles Scribner's Sons in 1898.

"That was the heyday of GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) reunions, and interest in the Civil War was high," Hughes said.